

Picea mariana - *Populus tremuloides* / Mixed Herbs Forest (Black Spruce - Aspen Forest)

COMMON NAME	Black Spruce - Trembling Aspen / Mixed Herbs Forest
SYNONYM	Black Spruce - Aspen Forest
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Forest (I)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Mixed evergreen-deciduous forest (I.C)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Mixed needle-leaved evergreen - cold-deciduous forest (I.C.3)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (I.C.3.N)
FORMATION	Mixed needle-leaved evergreen - cold-deciduous forest (I.C.3.N.a)
ALLIANCE	PICEA MARIANA - POPULUS TREMULOIDES FOREST ALLIANCE

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 2

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM TERRESTRIAL

RANGE

Voyageurs National Park

This type is uncommon and localized at Voyageurs National Park, and stands were not identified for description.

Globally

This community is found in northern Minnesota, northwestern Ontario, and Manitoba, but may occur elsewhere in Canada's boreal region.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

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Globally

This community is found on flat to gently sloping sites with fresh to moist mineral soils (Sims *et al.* 1989, Zoladeski *et al.* 1995). Soil texture is most often coarse loam, but can be clay, silt, or sand. Fine textured soils tend to be on lacustrine substrates while coarse textured soils result from morainal or glaciofluvial substrates. In Ontario, this community often occurs on calcareous soil (Sims *et al.* 1989).

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Voyageurs National Park

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
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Globally

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
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Tree canopy	<i>Picea mariana</i> , <i>Populus tremuloides</i>
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Short shrub	<i>Linnaea borealis</i> , <i>Abies balsamea</i> , <i>Rubus pubescens</i> , <i>Vaccinium angustifolium</i> , <i>Vaccinium myrtilloides</i> .
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CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Voyageurs National Park

Globally

Picea mariana, *Populus tremuloides*, *Linnaea borealis*, *Abies balsamea*, *Rubus pubescens*, *Vaccinium angustifolium*, *Vaccinium myrtilloides*.

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Voyageurs National Park

Not described at Voyageurs National Park. See description for Spruce-Fir-Aspen type (CEGL002475).

Globally

The tree layer is dominated by a moderately closed to closed canopy of mixed coniferous and deciduous species. *Populus tremuloides* is the only common deciduous tree, but scattered *Betula papyrifera* and *Populus balsamifera* are also found. *Picea mariana* is the most abundant coniferous species, and often the most abundant canopy species. *Abies balsamea*, *Picea glauca*, and *Pinus banksiana* are typical associated conifers. The shrub layer ranges from

USGS-NPS Vegetation Mapping Program
Voyageurs National Park

open to dense. Species found in this layer include *Diervilla lonicera*, *Ledum groenlandicum*, *Linnaea borealis*, *Rosa acicularis*, *Rubus pubescens*, *Vaccinium angustifolium*, and *Vaccinium myrtilloides*. The herbaceous layer has great diversity. *Aralia nudicaulis*, *Aster macrophyllus*, *Cornus canadensis*, *Coptis trifolia*, *Maianthemum canadense*, *Petasites frigidus*, *Trientalis borealis*, and *Viola renifolia* are common herbaceous species. Mosses also cover a substantial portion of the forest floor.

CONSERVATION RANK G4G5.

DATABASE CODE Cegl002516

COMMENTS

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This type was not described separately at Voyageurs National Park. See global description for this type under Cegl002516. Stands were mapped under the Spruce-Fir-Aspen Forest alliance, where the common type was the Spruce-Fir-Aspen Forest (Cegl002475).

Many of the *Abies balsamea* trees and shrubs in these communities are dying from Spruce Budworm infestations. In stands that border beaver ponds, selective beaver cutting of aspen and birch may occur.

REFERENCES

- Sims, R. A., W. D. Towill, K. A. Baldwin, and G. M. Wickware. 1989. Field guide to the forest ecosystem classification for northwestern Ontario. Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.
- Zoladeski, C. A., G. M. Wickware, R. J. Delorme, R. A. Sims, and I. G. W. Corns. 1995. Forest ecosystem classification for Manitoba: field guide. Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service, Northwest Region, Northern Forestry Center, Edmonton, Alberta. Special Report 2.